

**In the United States Court of Federal Claims**  
**OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS**  
**No. 21-1792V**  
**(not to be published)**

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MERLYN BONHAM,  
Petitioner,  
v.  
SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES,  
Respondent.  
\*\*\*\*\*

Filed: September 14, 2023

*Glen Sturtevant, Jr.*, Rawls Law Group, Richmond, VA, for Petitioner  
*Michael Lang*, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, for Respondent

**DECISION ON JOINT STIPULATION<sup>1</sup>**

On September 2, 2021, Merlyn Bonham (“Petitioner”) filed a petition seeking compensation under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (“the Vaccine Program”).<sup>2</sup> Pet., ECF No. 1. Petitioner alleges he suffered from chronic inflammatory demyelinating polyneuropathy (“CIDP”) as a result of the influenza (“flu”) vaccination he received on September 12, 2018. *See* Stipulation ¶ 2, 4, dated September 13, 2023 (ECF No. 39); *see also* Petition.

Respondent denies “that petitioner sustained a Table injury; denies that the influenza

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<sup>1</sup> Because this Decision contains a reasoned explanation for the action in this case, it must be made publicly accessible and will be posted on the United States Court of Federal Claims' website, and/or at <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/uscourts/national/cofc>, in accordance with the E-Government Act of 2002. 44 U.S.C. § 3501 note (2018) (Federal Management and Promotion of Electronic Government Services). **This means the Decision will be available to anyone with access to the internet.** In accordance with Vaccine Rule 18(b), Petitioner has 14 days to identify and move to redact medical or other information, the disclosure of which would constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy. If, upon review, I agree that the identified material fits within this definition, I will redact such material from public access.

<sup>2</sup> The Vaccine Program comprises Part 2 of the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, Pub. L. No. 99-660, 100 Stat. 3755 (codified as amended at 42 U.S.C. §§ 300aa-10–34 (2012)) (hereinafter “Vaccine Act” or “the Act”). All subsequent references to sections of the Vaccine Act shall be to the pertinent subparagraph of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa.

vaccine caused petitioner to suffer from CIDP; and further denies that the influenza vaccine caused petitioner to suffer from any other injury or his current condition.” *See* Stipulation ¶ 6. Nonetheless, both parties, while maintaining their above-stated positions, agreed in a stipulation filed September 13, 2023, that the issues before them can be settled and that a decision should be entered awarding Petitioner compensation.

I have reviewed the file, and based upon that review, I conclude that the parties’ stipulation is reasonable. I therefore adopt it as my decision in awarding damages on the terms set forth therein.

The stipulation awards:

a lump sum of \$45,000.00 in the form of a check payable to petitioner.

Stipulation ¶ 8. This award represents compensation for all damages that would be available under 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a).

I approve a Vaccine Program award in the requested amount set forth above to be made to Petitioner. In the absence of a motion for review filed pursuant to RCFC Appendix B, the Clerk of the Court is directed to enter judgment herewith.<sup>3</sup>

**IT IS SO ORDERED.**

**s/ Katherine E. Oler**  
Katherine E. Oler  
Special Master

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<sup>3</sup> Pursuant to Vaccine Rule 11(a), the parties may expedite entry of judgment by jointly filing notice renouncing their right to seek review.

**IN THE UNITED STATES COURT OF FEDERAL CLAIMS  
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MERLYN BONHAM,

Petitioner,

v.

SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN  
SERVICES,

Respondent.

No. 21-1792V  
Special Master Oler  
ECF

**STIPULATION**

The parties hereby stipulate to the following matters:

1. Petitioner Merlyn Bonham (“petitioner”) filed a petition for vaccine compensation under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-10 to -34 (the “Vaccine Program”). The petition seeks compensation for injuries allegedly related to petitioner’s receipt of the influenza vaccine, which contained in the Vaccine Injury Table (the “Table”), 42 C.F.R. § 100.3(a).
2. Petitioner received the influenza vaccine on September 12, 2018.
3. The vaccine was administered within the United States.
4. Petitioner alleges that he suffered chronic inflammatory demyelinating polyneuropathy (“CIDP”) that was caused-in-fact by the flu vaccine. Petitioner further alleges that he experienced the residual effects of his injury for more than six months.
5. Petitioner represents that there has been no prior award or settlement of a civil action for damages as a result of his condition.

6. Respondent denies that petitioner sustained a Table injury; denies that the influenza vaccine caused petitioner to suffer from CIDP; and further denies that the influenza vaccine caused petitioner to suffer from any other injury or his current condition.

7. Maintaining their above-stated positions, the parties nevertheless now agree that the issues between them shall be settled and that a decision should be entered awarding the compensation described in paragraph 8 of this Stipulation.

8. As soon as practicable after an entry of judgment reflecting a decision consistent with the terms of this Stipulation, and after petitioner has filed an election to receive compensation pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-21(a)(1), the Secretary of Health and Human Services will issue the following vaccine compensation payment:

A lump sum of **\$45,000.00** in the form of a check payable to petitioner. This amount represents compensation for all damages that would be available under 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a).

9. As soon as practicable after the entry of judgment on entitlement in this case, and after petitioner has filed both a proper and timely election to receive compensation pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-21(a)(1), and an application, the parties will submit to further proceedings before the special master to award reasonable attorneys' fees and costs incurred in proceeding upon this petition.

10. Petitioner and his attorney represent that compensation to be provided pursuant to this Stipulation is not for any items or services for which the Program is not primarily liable under 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(g), to the extent that payment has been made or can reasonably be expected to be made under any State compensation programs, insurance policies, Federal or State health benefits programs (other than Title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. § 1396 et seq.)), or by entities that provide health services on a pre-paid basis.

11. Payment made pursuant to paragraph 8 and any amounts awarded pursuant to paragraph 9 of this Stipulation will be made in accordance with 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(i), subject to the availability of sufficient statutory funds.

12. The parties and their attorneys further agree and stipulate that, except for any award for attorneys' fees and litigation costs, and past unreimbursed expenses, the money provided pursuant to this Stipulation will be used solely for the benefit of petitioner as contemplated by a strict construction of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a) and (d), and subject to the conditions of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(g) and (h).

13. In return for the payments described in paragraphs 8 and 9, petitioner, in his individual capacity, and on behalf of his heirs, executors, administrators, successors or assigns, does forever irrevocably and unconditionally release, acquit and discharge the United States and the Secretary of Health and Human Services from any and all actions or causes of action (including agreements, judgments, claims, damages, loss of services, expenses and all demands of whatever kind or nature) that have been brought, could have been brought, or could be timely brought in the Court of Federal Claims, under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, 42 U.S.C. § 300 aa-10 et seq., on account of, or in any way growing out of, any and all known or unknown, suspected or unsuspected personal injuries to or death of petitioner resulting from, or alleged to have resulted from, the influenza vaccination administered on September 12, 2018, as alleged in a petition for vaccine compensation filed on or about September 2, 2021, in the United States Court of Federal Claims as petition No. 21-1792V.

14. If petitioner should die prior to entry of judgment, this agreement shall be voidable upon proper notice to the Court on behalf of either or both of the parties.

15. If the special master fails to issue a decision in complete conformity with the terms of this Stipulation or if the Court of Federal Claims fails to enter judgment in conformity with a decision that is in complete conformity with the terms of this Stipulation, then the parties' settlement and this Stipulation shall be voidable at the sole discretion of either party.

16. This Stipulation expresses a full and complete negotiated settlement of liability and damages claimed under the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, as amended, except as otherwise noted in paragraph 9 above. There is absolutely no agreement on the part of the parties hereto to make any payment or to do any act or thing other than is herein expressly stated and clearly agreed to. The parties further agree and understand that the award described in this Stipulation may reflect a compromise of the parties' respective positions as to liability and/or amount of damages, and further, that a change in the nature of the injury or condition or in the items of compensation sought, is not grounds to modify or revise this agreement.

17. This Stipulation shall not be construed as an admission by the United States or the Secretary of Health and Human Services that the flu vaccine caused petitioner's alleged injury or any other injury or his current disability, or that petitioner suffered an injury contained in the Vaccine Injury Table.

18. All rights and obligations of petitioner hereunder shall apply equally to petitioner's heirs, executors, administrators, successors, and/or assigns.

END OF STIPULATION

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Respectfully submitted,


**PETITIONER:**

  
MERLYN BONHAM

**ATTORNEY OF RECORD FOR  
PETITIONER:**

  
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**AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE  
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AND HUMAN SERVICES:**

George R.  
Grimes -S14

Digitally signed by George R.  
Grimes -S14  
Date: 2023.06.28 08:31:46 -04'00'

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Dated: 9/13/23